

Dec 6<sup>th</sup> After a whole week rain we have got a  
touch of fine weather again - Mr Buschman  
has never come again <sup>but</sup> no doubt 'tis all right?  
or I should have heard before this



My dear Tom

Rome 30<sup>th</sup> Nov: 1869

As Caroline told me you were almost  
convalescent, so I think a line from me may  
amuse <sup>you</sup> in these dull November days, tho' I  
ought to say that here the weather has been  
mild & fine, indeed today I saw a butterfly  
in the City!!

My returning health & strength has  
been most severely taxed just now tho with  
no evil result. — The new Austrian Ambassador  
made it known that only uniforms or court-  
dresses would be admitted to his grand reception  
& consequently there was "great waiting and  
gnashing of teeth" & no end of complaints to  
particularly from military men who were  
without their uniforms — And so it occurred to  
me that if I wrote a polite request to the

Ambassador I might be able to remedy  
all this waiting - to my agreeable surprise this  
Excellence returned a very indulgent answer  
that I might introduce in evening dress any  
of my countrymen I pleased - the consequence  
was that I went with a train of 12 carriages  
containing 38 Ladies & Gentlemen & the Ambassador  
received me very graciously & all my party  
~~this time~~ <sup>the party</sup> was very magnificent, of course  
I was in full uniform with sword & hat & I  
soon perceived that I had been so fortunate as  
to stumble on a very gracious act, which had  
not only got me great good will from English  
people but also pleased his Excellence for it  
enabled him to keep up the decorum of his party.

I think upon the whole this the cleverest thing  
I have done & will place me well amongst the  
diplomats - my dress is very handsome <sup>from top to toe</sup> covered with  
silver lace, blue coat, <sup>the</sup> white waistcoat - the only park  
which was rather a close pinch was in my boots  
which I had not worn for two years - the Ladies  
contend who shall be escorted by the Consul

The excitement has done me good, but I confess  
the best part of it all was my getting into bed! for  
I am still weak & not able to do much. I do at  
times break down but I have great spirit,

Another good result is the sleep in the face to my  
mean enemies who have twice printed me as dead!!  
so now to be alive & kicking is every thing for me

For this winter I shall not be able to have the good  
company of my twins for Claudia is very ill at Hastings  
& Eleanor with her, I fear much that poor Claudia  
is declining seriously, I'm very sad with her (Chicks!!)  
so that I shall be left alone, but with the active  
employment during the day I do not feel it so much  
for after dinner I am very tired & often go to bed at  
8 but now the invitations come upon me & I  
must measure my strength - yet the excitement of  
a nice dinner party does me good

I have <sup>several</sup> pieces of music & am able to play  
but very so-so, yet enough to amuse me after dinner  
Dec 3 - You'll be pleased to hear that Rome is all agog  
at the near approach of the Albanian water which  
the 23<sup>rd</sup> inst will be opened. - the pipes are laid to  
the very gate, it will be a joyfull day for Rome  
get great praise for my efforts & success, but few  
know

my vocation favours this & I have never over  
work indeed I am favoured that arriving at  
the "scar & yellow leaf" of my existence I  
should thus be able to find tranquility after  
such a knocking about life & enjoy the well  
being of my children & now & then a visit  
from some of them

My great share of Marcellian water opens on  
Wed<sup>d</sup> the 23<sup>d</sup> & I think I'm likely to get good  
interest (10 per cent) on my thousand pounds  
which I have scraped together with so much  
difficulty & pinching - This has been all  
done for dear Eleanor

I hope that my Consulate will be left  
to me as long as I am able to sustain it &  
this with the aid of two excellent Sec<sup>ys</sup> is  
well done & may continue for years should  
God <sup>still</sup> spare me for I have been greatly blessed  
as I dare say you all think - With my  
love to your dear wife & son  
Your loving brother  
Joe